



SUMMER *of* LOVE

friends · family · devotion

June 20-Sept. 20, 2014

This summer family exhibition at the TCA features colorful and endearing artworks about love created by local and national artists. Featured artworks include ceramic sculptures, botanical prints and drawings, original children's book illustrations and contemporary paintings and installations. Summer of Love also includes historical and contemporary displays about symbols of love from the Schilling Library Archives, Desert Botanical Garden, Tempe History Museum and Bobbie's Flowers of Tempe.

Artists:

Gene Almendinger, Marco Albarran, Denise Currier, Esmeralda Delaney, Wendy Hodgson, Molly Idle, Sandra Luerhsen, Frank Ybarra and art students from local Tempe high schools.

Thank you to the following exhibition partners: Bobbie's Flowers of Tempe, Desert Botanical Garden, Tempe History Museum and Tempe Center for the Arts Foundation.

Tempe Center for the Arts





Gene Almendinger, Tempe

Gene Almendinger lived the first 40 years of his life in the Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN area. As a youth, he was always interested in science. In 1980, he graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in electrical engineering. This task took him nine years to complete by going to school part time and working in industry full time.

In 1981, Almendinger started working for Motorola in Arizona. There, he met another engineer who mentored his interest in photography. Encouraged by his mentor, he joined the Photographic Society of America (PSA). Over the years, he has participated in PSA exhibitions and expanded his imagery to include both general images and nature. Also, soon after moving to Arizona, Alemnedinger entered a photography contest at the Desert Botanical Garden (DBG), where he met Dottie O'Rourke, a very spirited volunteer who persuaded him to become a docent. Now, he leads tours of DBG and interprets the desert environment to visitors.

Almendinger's photography has been used in DBG publications, the Arizona Republic and KAET Public Television.

One of his favorite quotes is by Ella Wheeler Wilcox: *"A weed is but an unloved flower."*





Marco Albarran, Tempe

Albarran was born in Mexico and later grew up in Yuma. Some of his earliest memories are about the stories and cultural traditions passed on to him and his siblings by his grandmother. He recalls her talking about their family and community being divided during the Mexican Revolution and how she would say “Remember mijó, even if we have some differences between our relatives, we are still family.” He was also fascinated by the traditions passed on by generations of his indigenous ancestors such as corn field blessings, herbal remedies and food offerings to deceased relatives during Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead).

Albarran says the love of his family and culture was and continues to be the “fuel” for his art and belief system. Working as a farm laborer at an early age, meeting and working with Cesar Chavez (United Farm Workers) and growing up in a big family also led him to be an advocate and community leader in the areas of education, health and the arts.

Today, Albarran continues to explore and admire the enormous similarities between world cultures, stories and traditions. Not surprisingly, many of his artworks reflect multiple points of view, because as he says *“knowledge does not belong to any one person, but everyone.... In the piece ‘Commercial Break,’ I bring together stories about duality from both Mayan and Hindu mythology. Both traditions have stories about misbehaving twins (a boy and girl). In the Mayan Popol Vu scriptures (story of creation), the twins would tear communities apart. The behavior eventually cost them their lives—but did solve some of the towns’ problems. ‘Summer of Love’ is about connections, rifts and make-ups. For me, the duality of this piece shows how even families with differences can work it out.”*

www.marcoalbarran.com





Denise A. Currier, Mesa

Currier has lived in Mesa for more than thirty years. She started sewing at a young age and has been interested in fiber work ever since. She is also an accomplished graphic designer

and over the years has worked on clothing ads and commercial window displays.

She has also made contributions through her innovations with design and photographic printing processes specific to fiber surfaces. Over the years, Currier's art quilts have included designs that are both abstract and pictorial at the same time.

Many of her quilts relate to her own loves of family, animals and nature. She is also an artist that likes the art making process as much as the end product.

Currier's work has been shown both locally and nationally with organizations including the Chandler Center for the Arts, Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport Museum, Atlanta Falcons headquarters and the Arthur M. Blank Foundation in Georgia. She has also appeared in publications such as Phoenix Home and Garden and Mayo Clinic magazines, the Arizona Republic and Mesa Tribune newspapers and the books *500 Art Quilts: An Inspiring Collection of Contemporary Work* and *America: From the Heart: Quilters Remember September 11, 2001*.

Currier says: *"Art seems to find me in a place of defined, self-taught creative play. I select themes inspired by everyday activities and images that fit into a series of dimensional art forms. Each design series are considered by others as all over the place, but I see them as always in the same place of my achievements by use of materials, techniques and/or theme with a familiar artistic approach and presentation. If I am happy with the journey and the final outcome, then I have accomplished success; I'm always adrenalized and excited about the next ARTrageous project!"*

www.DeniseACurrier.com





Esmeralda DeLaney, Phoenix

Delaney received her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees from Arizona State University and another Master of Fine Arts degree from Texas University in Lubbock. When not creating artwork, she has been an active teacher and workshop instructor at both the high school and college level. Currently she is a residential faculty member at the art department at Glendale Community College.

Delaney has been involved in numerous exhibitions both locally and nationally such as the Ceramics Research Center at the ASU Art Museum, Bragg's Pie Factory and Halle Heart Center in Phoenix and Obsidian Gallery in Tucson. Her work is also part of collections such as the Portland Museum of Art in Maine and Sky Harbor Airport Museum in Phoenix.

Delaney says "My work is a mixture of humor and satire reflecting on the love one feels for their pets: their quirks and adoration they show us day-to-day."





Wendy Hodgson, Phoenix

Hodgson is Herbarium Curator, Research Botanist and botanical illustrator at the Desert Botanical Garden (DBG) in Phoenix, where she has worked for nearly forty years.

Her area of research is floristics (a branch of botany that studies plants in specific region) of the southwest United States and northern Mexico. She is especially interested in rare and native plants of Arizona. Currently, she is documenting and investigating plants within Grand Canyon National Park, plant communities along the 800-mile Arizona Trail, and southwest cacti. She is an avid plant collector who believes in the power of education and changing peoples' lives for the better through the world of plants.

Hodgson says *"I have explored areas in the Southwest, particularly Arizona, documenting plants, theorizing about human culture and how they affected plant distribution, and finding new species while relying on gut feelings and a sixth sense for odd plants. I love desert plants for many reasons – I am always for the underdog. In a world where many of our senses have to continually be bombarded by bigger and brighter, I love the subtlety of desert plant beauty. They thrive under conditions that most plants would wilt in. They have evolved beautifully with our desert environs, and we need to stop and look at them for what they are, their tenacity and amazing beauty (along with all the critters that are associated with them)."*

Hodgson's favorite quote is by Rose Collom (1870-1956), the first Grand Canyon botanist, charter member of DBG, and 2012 inductee to Arizona Women's Hall of Fame: *"In these troubled times when all the world is so upset, I think it rather steadies one to 'consider the lilies of the field,' to examine closely the exquisite texture and coloring of the petals of many flowers, to look with appreciation upon a magnificent forest [or desert] and to feel thankful for the beautiful world in which we live."*



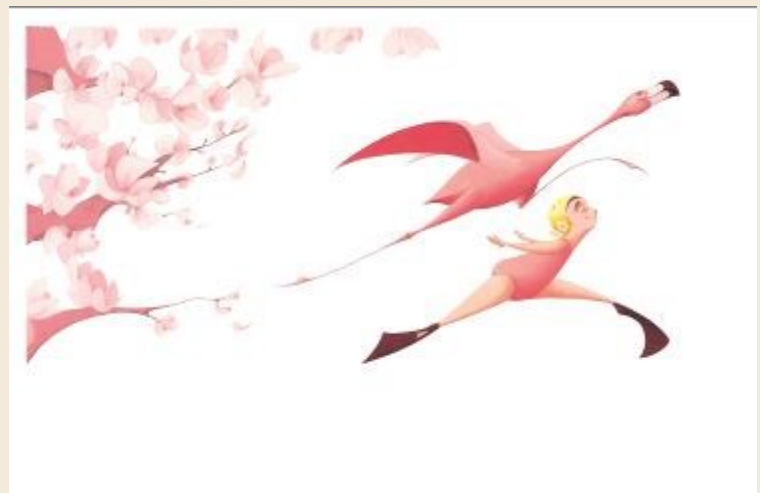
Molly Idle, Tempe

Idle began drawing at the young age of 18 months, though her professional career began slightly later. Upon graduating from Arizona State University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in drawing, Idle accepted an offer to work for DreamWorks Feature Animation Studio as a final line animator. After five years, a number of film credits, and an incredibly good time, she left the studio and leapt into the world of children's book illustration. She now lives in Arizona with her husband, two sons and three cats. When not making mischief with her boys, or watching old black and white movies with a cat in her lap, Idle can be found at her desk scribbling away a plethora of profoundly whimsical projects.

“My illustrations and stories are inspired by relationships. As an illustrator I’m intrigued by relationships between shapes and lines, and interactions between colors. In my picture book, ‘Flora and the Flamingo,’ Flora and her graceful flamingo friend explore the trials and joys of friendship through an elaborate synchronized dance. With a twist, a turn, and even a flop, these unlikely friends learn at last how to dance together in perfect harmony.

“I am intrigued by emotional relationships and the way we relate to one another. But what really motivates me and gets me up in the mornings are my boys. I’ve always been a proficient draftsman, but it wasn’t until my husband and I had our sons that my work became infused with a sense of humor and warmth that I can only attribute to our family. And it is the love in, and of, all of these relationships that I hope to communicate in my books.”

www.idleillustration.com





Sandra Luehrsen, Tempe

Luehrsen was born in Chicago, Ill. She earned her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees at Northern Illinois University, and a second Master of Fine Arts degree at Arizona State

University. In 1999, she left a position as assistant dean of the ASU Graduate School to start her own art business. She now also teaches 3D design at Mesa Community College, presents clay workshops around the Valley and exhibits her work. Luehrsen's ceramic art can be found in both national and international collections such as the Auckland Institute and Museum in New Zealand, the ASU Art Museum's Ceramics Research Center, the Kamm Teapot Foundation in Sparta, NC. She has also been a featured artist in several books including *500 Prints on Clay*, *500 Teapots 2*, *Smashing Glazes* and *The Ceramic Surface Design Book*.

Luehrsen describes her latest series of sculptures as inspired by her love of the southwest landscape and desert botanicals in particular. She says: *"I came from Chicago to this wild place, Arizona, for a new beginning. I didn't expect it but the exotic flora fascinated me right from the start. Inspired by the desert, I use red earthenware clay to create my own hybrids. At least two parts comprise many of my sculptures. They have a container and a plant. I blur the lines between the two; the container becomes the plant and the plant morphs into the container."*

"Each sculpture goes through multiple firings. I make a boron-based creamy matte glaze with raw materials and add ceramic stains for color. I also fire nichrome (a kiln element) wire into the sculpture and apply gold or copper metallic luster to it for glowing warmth."

www.Sluehrstudios.com





Frank Ybarra, Phoenix

Ybarra studied graphic design at Arizona State University, but in 1982, left school to accept a job as a graphic designer for Samaritan Health System in Phoenix, a position he held for twelve years. Around the same time he started doing freelance projects and continued to produce studio works. By 1994 he had gained a sufficient number of clients for his freelance illustration business to permit him to work completely on his own, dividing his time between commercial and fine art. In 2012, Ybarra's work was chosen to appear on the Arizona State Centennial advertising campaign.

Having grown up on the east side of Phoenix, Ybarra frequently uses physical landmarks and memories that were parts of his childhood experience. He uses bright, bold colors and his compositions are rooted in traditional Hispanic art and Americana. Many of his works are a cohesive blend of both cultures, portraying scenes and symbols from The Virgin of Guadalupe to Route 66.

Ybarra says *"I was born and raised in Phoenix. Art has always been a love of mine. Therefore my art depicts our desert lifestyle as well as family memories, traditions, and my Mexican cultural background. The art in this exhibition features Mexican folklorico dancers, which are reminiscent of my parent's lives, as well as every day life events that we sometimes take for granted. My family was always very supportive of my interests. I thank them for their love and support."*

www.Ybarraart.com

